A U M

When you feel lonely, remember that on the higher planes we are never alone.
—W. Q. JUDGE

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XLI August, 1953 No. 10

THE MYSTERY OF STRENGTH

TEACHERS of Theosophy, such as H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge, are naturally an inspiration to students who have come to recognize the never-failing help to be found in their books and articles. But if inspiration is the first and primary response, there is, or ought to be, another reaction which is really not less important. It is logical to ask: In what, precisely, does this capacity to inspire consist?

It will probably be better, in considering this question, to look first at the writings of Mr. Judge, since H.P.B.'s works are often so profoundly Olympian as to outrun even the active imagination. Mr. Judge's articles and his letters embody a deceptive simplicity—deceptive because one might think that, with little effort, someone else could write in the same way. Yet should anyone essay this project, he will soon discover that the "life" in the pages of Mr. Judge is truly inimitable. Where a student will put together heavy, stilted phrases, making himself feel, by turns, pompous or inarticulate, Mr. Judge seems to have written in a flow of direct communication from what he knows beyond doubt or forgetting. Another man might coin a single expression worth remembering, but so many of Judge's phrases seem worth remembering. Here is no preaching, no moralizing, although what is said reaches in and touches the moral sense, sets going currents of constructive feeling, and uplifts the heart. His writing is without rhetoric, verbiage, or posturing—in a word, it is *natural;* so the question arises, What is it in a man like Judge which makes possible this unadorned yet impressive validity, this grip he gains upon his reader?

Perhaps we cannot know, in so many words. Perhaps this is the sort of understanding which must be lived, instead of talked or written

about. Yet he is human, and all of us are human, so that on such common ground there should be something to be found out about this puzzle or mystery. One approach might be through the conception of intensity of life and perception. There is no man who, at one time or another in his life, does not reach a pitch of conscious feeling where, for the first time, he has a sense of absolute knowledge about something. An experience of this sort, no doubt, will be blurred for many, yet if we are to think that being human is different from being animal, it seems reasonable to say that *human* beings will inevitably come to some grand crisis in the knowing process, just as all animal life has its grand crises in birth, procreation, and death. Surely, while man, also, participates in these psycho-biological climaxes, he will in addition be brought by the very principles of his inner nature to the higher correspondences of these events on the level of conscious or *manasic* experience. There must be as much order, as much substance and form, in the cycle of human life as there are in the cycles of psychic and physical existence. If *The Bhagavad-Gita* can be taken to represent the ideal cycle of Everyman as a human being—as more than a psychic and physical being—then the types of psychological experience through which Arjuna passes in this great Sanskrit poem are the basic types of psychological experience for all mankind.

Who is not battered by Karma? And who, being battered, does not rise, like the Ancient Mariner, on the morrow a wiser man? The blows of Karma do not of themselves make us wise, but often they have the effect of stripping away the inconsequential elements of our lives. It is as though, for a few moments or a few hours, the cloudy atmosphere of personal existence is parted by a strong wind, and we see as we have never seen before. A kind of melancholy may haunt this "revelation" brought by what seems misfortune. One wonders why he had not the wisdom to reach the place of understanding without being pressed to it by events and circumstances. Yet being there, we see more clearly and are able to think without distraction. The weaknesses and angers of yesterday seem to have belonged to some other person, so impotent are they to stir us now. Tomorrow, or a week hence, we may have lost this rare immunity, for we are not yet steadfast in position taken, invulnerable to the gusts of impulse which sweep into the present out of the past. Or, if the experience has been jolting enough, and we strong enough to stand the impact of self-revelation, we may indeed retain the

essence of the hour and carry it with us always. And it is this, more than likely, that gave Mr. Judge his extraordinary capacity for living philosophical expression.

What ordinary men gain only at hours of trial, testing, and extremity, he had all the time, and in the full symmetry of an impersonal intelligence. It is this that puzzles us—this glorious constancy of feeling, this unvarying direction of the mind to the heart of the matter. We talk of "sacrifice," of "discipline," and all the other symbols which represent the striving of our hearts, yet for Judge there was no "sacrifice": he did precisely what his heart desired, and doing it, accomplished exactly what was needed for those about him.

It is fortunate that students do have a vocabulary of striving, are acquainted with words like "duty" and "impersonality" and the like, for at least these words serve as counters to keep the attention focussed upon the psychological states which we may long for, but find so difficult to reach. Those in the world who use the vocabulary of aspiration are all too few, and even a faltering striver for perfection is better than no striver at all. Yet the fact of the matter is that, if such terms are to be replaced by knowledge, we shall find it necessary to redefine their meaning, gradually, from the viewpoint of the inner man who fulfills their content naturally, without strain or fuming anxiety, leaving behind the personal attitudes which look upon sacrifice as some sort of moral necessity which must be gone through for the sake of salvation, yet is decidedly inconvenient at the time.

The sorrows that come to us, the feelings of deep inadequacy, the traps which seem to capture our freedom and make us impotent or ineffectual for a time—are we so sure that they are not just what we have in fact desired? We long for wisdom, for the intensity of a Judge, for the Himalayan perspective of an H.P.B., but are we ready to accept without complaint the ordeal which might just possibly bring us to the next plateau of enlightenment in the long, upward journey? Have we thought that to know for oneself, at one stage in the cycle of development, is bound to involve feeling terribly forgotten and alone? That only the soul who stands firm and courageous, even though every last shred of nourishment is denied the personality, can ever reach the heights? No one can even begin a climb without balance, so that balance is far more important than eminence, or even apparent elevation.

The things that bring us face to face with ourselves, and with life—

that with surgical surety tear away the fabric of illusions, that strip us bare of cushions, padding, gadgets of self-esteem—these are the things which are our truest instructors. They are our own, our Karma, which teach us what we have failed to learn, and which we can no longer neglect. Sometimes the agony of self-recognition is too great to bear, and then we are confronted by the sad spectacle of a soul which flees into the refuge of self-righteousness, which blames others for misfortunes that are, like all misfortunes, almost entirely self-made.

It is a matter, finally, of faith in Karma, in the Law, and faith in oneself. There is no route to wisdom which can escape this great adjustment of the consciousness to what, in full significance, may be called the Facts of Life. Only after the period of despondency is passed does the learning even begin. Until then, we remain but the merest probationers, fortunate in our affinities, which have brought us into contact with the power that moves to righteousness, the great occult energy of the Theosophical Movement—but unless we are ready to make a peace with Life and *all* its vicissitudes, we are not ready to accept the knowledge of the self which Karma brings to us. Some day, somewhere, we shall resolve to meet our destiny, to bear our trials, and never to evade what is our own. It is this resolve, perhaps, which makes us into whole men, and this resolve, tenaciously pursued, which makes men into gods.

"THE PSYCHOLOGY OF BROTHERHOOD"

If you find friction between yourself and another or others, never stop to think where they are wrong. Everybody is always wrong somewhere; and, apart from that, it would be easy enough to find their errors in your own imagination. Their errors, real or imaginary, are no concern of yours, are not your duty, and need not and should not be considered by you. For you to do so would be to make an occult "break." What concerns you and what is your duty is to discover wherein you have been at fault. If, on finding friction of any sort, you will look back over your past thoughts and words and deeds, you will surely find you have erred, either directly or indirectly, by leaving something undone or unsaid. By living that way you will learn a good deal about yourself, while by looking for and noting the possible faults of others—no matter how greatly they have sinned, in your opinion—you will learn nothing and will merely prove yourself an ass. —W. Q. JUDGE

PSYCHIC AND NOETIC ACTION

"... The knowledge of the past, present, and future, is embodied in Kshetrajna (the 'Self')." —*Occult Axioms*

II

HAVING explained in what particulars, and why, as Occultists, we disagree with materialistic physiological psychology, we may now proceed to point out the difference between psychic and noëtic mental functions, the noëtic not being recognized by official science.

Moreover, we, Theosophists, understand the terms "psychic" and "psychism" somewhat differently from the average public, science, and even theology, the latter giving it a significance which both science and Theosophy reject, and the public in general remaining with a very hazy conception of what is really meant by the terms. For many, there is little, if any, difference between "psychic" and "psychological," both words relating in some way to the *human* soul. Some modern metaphysicians have wisely agreed to disconnect the word Mind (*pneuma*) from Soul (*psyche*), the one being the rational, spiritual part, the other—*psyche*—the living principle in man, the breath that *animates* him (from *anima,* soul). Yet, if this is so, how in this case refuse a soul to *animals?* These are, no less than man, informed with the same principle of sentient life, the *nephesh* of the 2nd chapter of *Genesis.* The Soul is by no means the Mind, nor can an idiot, bereft of the latter, be called a "soul-less" being. To describe, as the physiologists do, the human Soul in its relations to senses and appetites, desires and passions, common to man and the brute, and then endow it with God-like intellect, with spiritual and rational faculties which can take their source but in a *supersensible* world—is to throw for ever the veil of an impenetrable mystery over the subject. Yet in modern science, "psychology" and "psychism" relate only to conditions of the nervous system, mental phenomena being traced solely to molecular action. The higher *noëtic* character of the Mind-Principle is entirely ignored, and even rejected as a "superstition" by both physiologists and psychologists. Psychology, in fact, has become a synonym in many cases for the science of psychi-

---

NOTE—This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for November, 1890, and was last printed in THEOSOPHY for March and April, 1940.

atry. Therefore, students of Theosophy being compelled to differ from all these, have adopted the doctrine that underlies the time-honored philosophies of the East. What it is, may be found further on.

To better understand the foregoing arguments and those which follow, the reader is asked to turn to the editorial in the September *Lucifer* ("The Dual Aspect of Wisdom," p. 3), and acquaint himself with the *double aspect* of that which is termed by St. James in his Third Epistle at once—the *devilish, terrestrial* wisdom, and the "wisdom from above." In another editorial, "Kosmic Mind" (April, 1890), it is also stated, that the ancient Hindus endowed every cell in the human body with consciousness, giving each the name of a God or Goddess. Speaking of atoms in the name of science and philosophy, Professor Ladd calls them in his work "*supersensible beings.*" Occultism regards every atom[1] as an "independent entity" and every cell as a "conscious unit." It explains that no sooner do such atoms group to form cells, than the latter become endowed with consciousness, each of its own kind, and with *free-will to act within* the limits of law. Nor are we entirely deprived of scientific evidence for such statements as the two above named editorials well prove.* More than one learned physiologist of the golden minority, in our own day, moreover, is rapidly coming to the conviction, that memory has no seat, no special organ of its own in the human brain, but that it has *seats* in every organ of the body.

"No good ground exists for speaking of any special organ, or seat of memory," writes Professor J. T. Ladd.[2] "Every organ indeed, every area, and every limit of the nervous system has its own memory" (p. 553 *loc. cit.*).

The seat of memory, then, is assuredly neither here nor there, but everywhere throughout the human body. To locate its organ in the brain is to limit and dwarf the Universal Mind and its countless Rays (the *Manasa putra*) which inform every rational mortal. As we write for Theosophists, first of all, we care little for the psychophobian prejudices of the Materialists who may read this and sniff contemptuously at the mention of "Universal Mind" and the Higher *noëtic* souls of

---

[1] One of the names of Brahmâ is *anu* or "atom."

* "The Dual Aspect of Wisdom" was reprinted in THEOSOPHY for February, 1940 (p. 160), and "Kosmic Mind" in December, 1939 (p. 60) and January, 1940 (p. 118). —Eds.

[2] Professor of Philosophy at Yale University.

men. But what *is* memory, we ask. "Both presentation of sense and image of memory, are transitory phases of consciousness," we are answered. But what is Consciousness itself?—we ask again. *"We cannot define Consciousness,"* Professor Ladd tells us.[3] Thus, that which we are asked to do by physiological psychology is, to content ourselves with controverting the various states of Consciousness by other people's private and unverifiable hypotheses; and this, on "questions of cerebral physiology *where experts and novices are alike ignorant,"* to use the pointed remark of the said author. Hypothesis for hypothesis, then, we may as well hold to the teachings of our Seers, as to the conjectures of those who deny both such Seers and their wisdom. The more so, as we are told by the same honest man of science, that "if metaphysics and ethics cannot properly dictate their facts and conclusions to the science of physiological psychology . . . in turn this science cannot properly dictate to metaphysics and ethics the conclusions which they shall draw from facts of Consciousness, by giving out its myths and fables in the garb of well ascertained history of the cerebral processes" (p. 544).

Now, since the metaphysics of Occult physiology and psychology postulate within mortal man an immortal entity, "divine Mind," or *Nous,* whose pale and too often distorted reflection is that, which we call "Mind" and intellect in men—virtually an entity apart from the former during the period of every incarnation—we say that the *two* sources of "memory" are in these two "principles." These two we distinguish as the Higher *Manas* (Mind or Ego), and the *Kama-Manas, i.e.,* the rational, but earthly or physical intellect of man, incased in, and bound by, matter, therefore subject to the influence of the latter: the all-conscious SELF, that which reincarnates periodically—verily the WORD made flesh!—and which is always the same, while its reflected "Double," changing with every new incarnation and personality, is, therefore, conscious but for a life-period. The latter "principle" is the *Lower* Self, or that, which manifesting through our *organic* system, acting on this plane of illusion, imagines itself the *Ego Sum,* and thus falls into what Buddhist philosophy brands as the "heresy of separateness." The former, we term INDIVIDUALITY, the latter *Personality.* From the first proceeds all the *noëtic* element, from the second, the *psychic, i.e.,* "terrestrial wisdom" at best, as it is influenced by all the chaotic stimuli of the human or rather *animal passions* of the living body.

---

[3] "Elements of Physiological Psychology."

The "Higher Ego" cannot act directly on the body, as its consciousness belongs to quite another plane and planes of ideation: the "lower" *Self* does: and its action and behaviour *depend on its free will and choice* as to whether it will gravitate more towards its parent ("the Father in Heaven") or the "animal" which it informs, the man of flesh. The "Higher Ego," as part of the essence of the UNIVERSAL MIND, is unconditionally omniscient on its own plane, and only potentially so in our terrestrial sphere, as it has to act solely through its *alter ego*—the Personal Self. Now, although the former is the vehicle of all knowledge of the past, the present, and the future, and although it is from this fountain-head that its "double" catches occasional glimpses of that which is beyond the senses of man, and transmits them to certain brain cells (unknown to science in their functions), thus making of man a *Seer,* a soothsayer, and a prophet; yet the memory of bygone events—especially of the earth earthy—has its seat in the Personal Ego alone. No memory of a purely daily-life function, of a physical, egotistical, or of a lower mental nature—such as, *e.g.,* eating and drinking, enjoying personal sensual pleasures, transacting business to the detriment of one's neighbor, etc., etc., has aught to do with the "Higher" Mind or Ego. Nor has it any direct dealings on this physical plane with either our brain or our heart—for these two are the organs of a power higher than the *Personality*—but only with our passional organs, such as the liver, the stomach, the spleen, etc. Thus it only stands to reason that the memory of such-like events must be first awakened in that organ which was the first to induce the action remembered afterwards, and conveyed it to our "sense-thought," which is entirely *distinct from the "super-sensuous" thought.* It is only the higher forms of the latter, the *superconscious* mental experiences, that can correlate with the cerebral and cardiac centres. The memories of physical and *selfish* (or personal) deeds, on the other hand, together with the mental experiences of a terrestrial nature, and of earthly biological functions, can, of necessity, only be correlated with the molecular constitution of various *Kamic* organs, and the "dynamical associations" of the elements of the nervous system in each particular organ.

Therefore, when Professor Ladd, after showing that every element of the nervous system has a memory of its own, adds:—"This view belongs to the very essence of every theory which considers conscious mental reproduction as only one form or phase of the biological fact

of organic memory"—he must include among such theories the Occult teaching. For no Occultist could express such teaching more correctly than the Professor, who says, in winding up his argument: "We might properly speak, then, of the memory of the end-organ of vision or of hearing, of the memory of the spinal cord and of the different so-called 'centres' of reflex action belonging to the chords of the memory of the medulla oblongata, the cerebellum, etc." This is the essence of Occult teaching—even in the Tantra works. Indeed, every organ in our body *has its own memory.* For if it is endowed with a consciousness "of its own kind," every cell must of necessity have also a memory of its own kind, as likewise its own *psychic* and *noëtic* action. Responding to the touch of both a physical and a *metaphysical* Force,[4] the impulse given by the *psychic* (or psycho-molecular) Force will act from *without within;* while that of the *noëtic* (shall we call it Spiritual-dynamical?) Force works *from within without.* For, as our body is the covering of the inner "principles," soul, mind, life, etc., so the molecule or the cell is the body in which dwell its "principles," the (to our senses and comprehension) immaterial atoms which compose that cell. The cell's activity and behavior are determined by its being propelled either inwardly or outwardly, by the noëtic or the psychic Force, the former having no relation to the *physical* cells proper. Therefore, while the latter act under the unavoidable law of the conservation and correlation of physical energy, the atoms—being psycho-spiritual, *not physical units —act under laws of their own,* just as Professor Ladd's "Unit-Being," which is our "Mind-Ego," does, in his very philosophical and scientific hypothesis. Every human organ and each cell in the latter has a keyboard of its own, like that of a piano, only that it registers and emits sensations instead of sounds. Every key contains the potentiality of good or bad, of producing harmony or disharmony. This depends on the impulse given and the combinations produced; on the force of the touch of the artist at work, a "double-faced Unity," indeed. And it is the action of this or the other "Face" of the Unity that determines the nature and the dynamical character of the manifested phenomena as a resulting action, and this whether they be physical or mental. For the whole life of man is guided by this double-faced Entity. If the impulse comes from the "Wisdom above," the Force applied being noëtic or

---

[4] We fondly trust this very *unscientific* term will throw no "Animalist" into hysterics *beyond* recovery.

spiritual, the results will be actions worthy of the divine propeller; if from the "terrestrial, devilish wisdom" (psychic power), man's activities will be selfish, based solely on the exigencies of his physical, hence animal, nature. The above may sound to the average reader as pure nonsense; but every Theosophist must understand when told that there are *Manasic* as well as *Kamic* organs in him, although the cells of his body answer to both physical and spiritual impulses.

Verily that body, so desecrated by Materialism and man himself, is the temple of the Holy Grail, the *Adytum* of the grandest, nay, of all, the mysteries of nature in our solar universe. That body is an Æolian harp, chorded with two sets of strings, one made of pure silver, the other of catgut. When the breath from the divine Fiat brushes softly over the former, man becomes like unto *his* God—but the other set feels it not. It needs the breeze of a strong terrestrial wind, impregnated with animal effluvia, to set its animal chords vibrating. It is the function of the physical, lower mind to act upon the physical organs and their cells; but, it is the higher mind *alone* which can influence the atoms interacting in those cells, which interaction is alone capable of exciting the brain, *viâ the spinal "centre" cord,* to a mental representation of spiritual ideas far beyond any objects on this material plane. The phenomena of divine consciousness have to be regarded as activities of our mind on another and a higher plane, working through something less substantial than the moving molecules of the brain. They cannot be explained as the simple resultant of the cerebral physiological process, as indeed the latter only condition them or give them a final form for purposes of concrete manifestation. Occultism teaches that the liver and the spleen-cells are the most subservient to the action of our "personal" mind, the heart being the organ *par excellence* through which the "Higher" Ego acts—through the Lower Self.

Nor can the visions or memory of purely terrestrial events be transmitted directly through the mental perceptions of the brain—the direct recipient of the impressions of the heart. All such recollections have to be first stimulated by and awakened in the organs which were the originators, as already stated, of the various causes that led to the results, or, the direct recipients and participators of the latter. In other words, if what is called "association of *ideas*" has much to do with the awakening of memory, the mutual interaction and consistent interrelation between the personal "Mind-Entity" and the organs of the

human body have far more so. A hungry stomach evokes the vision of a past banquet, because its action is reflected and repeated in the *personal* mind. But even before the memory of the personal Self radiates the vision from the tablets wherein are stored the experiences of one's daily life—even to the minutest details—the memory of the stomach has already evoked the same. And so with all the organs of the body. It is they which originate according to their animal needs and desires the electro-vital sparks that illuminate the field of consciousness in the Lower Ego; and it is these sparks which in their turn awaken to function the reminiscences in it. The whole human body is, as said, a vast sounding board, in which each cell bears a long record of impressions connected with its parent organ, and each cell has a memory and a consciousness of its kind, or call it instinct if you will. These impressions are, according to the nature of the organ, physical, psychic, or mental, as they relate to this or another plane. They may be called "states of consciousness" only for the want of a better expression—as there are states of instinctual, mental, and purely abstract, or spiritual consciousness. If we trace all such "psychic" actions to brain-work, it is only because in that mansion called the human body the brain is the front-door, and the only one which opens out into Space. All the others are inner doors, opening in the private building, through which travel incessantly the transmitting agents of memory and sensation. The clearness, the vividness, and intensity of these depend on the state of health and the organic soundness of the transmitters. But their reality, in the sense of trueness or correctness, is due to the "principle" they originate from, and the preponderance in the Lower *Manas* of the *noëtic* or of the *phrenic* ("Kamic," terrestrial) element.

For, as Occultism teaches, if the Higher Mind-Entity—the permanent and the immortal—is of the divine homogeneous essence of "Alaya-Akasa,"[5] or Mahat,—its reflection, the Personal Mind, is, as a temporary "Principle," of the Substance of the Astral Light. As a pure ray of the "Son of the Universal Mind," it could perform no functions in the body, and would remain powerless over the turbulent organs of Matter. Thus, while its inner constitution is Manasic, its "body," or rather functioning essence, is heterogeneous, and leavened with the Astral Light, the lowest element of Ether. It is a part of the mission of the Manasic Ray, to get gradually rid of the blind, deceptive element

[5] Another name for the universal mind.

which, though it makes of it an active spiritual entity on this plane, still brings it into so close contact with matter as to entirely becloud its divine nature and stultify its intuitions.

This leads us to see the difference between the pure noëtic and the terrestrial psychic visions of seership and mediumship. The former can be obtained by one of two means; *(a)* on the condition of paralyzing at will the *memory* and the instinctual, independent action of all the material organs and even cells in the body of flesh, an act which, once that the light of the Higher Ego has consumed and subjected for ever the passional nature of the personal, lower Ego, is easy, but requires an adept; and *(b)* of being a reincarnation of one, who, in a previous birth, had attained through extreme purity of life and efforts in the right direction almost to a *Yogi*-state of holiness and saintship. There is also a third possibility of reaching in mystic visions the plane of the higher Manas; but it is only occasional and does not depend on the will of the Seer, but on the extreme weakness and exhaustion of the material body through illness and suffering. The Seeress of Prevorst was an instance of the latter case; and Jacob Boëhme of our second category. In all other cases of abnormal seership, of so-called clairaudience, clairvoyance and trances, it is simply—*mediumship.*

Now what is a medium? The term medium, when not applied simply to things and objects, is supposed to be a person through whom the action of another person or being is either manifested or transmitted. Spiritualists believing in communications with disembodied spirits, and that these can manifest through, or impress sensitives to transmit "messages" from them, regard mediumship as a blessing and a great privilege. We Theosophists, on the other hand, who do not believe in the "communion of spirits" as Spiritualists do, regard the gift as one of the most dangerous of abnormal nervous diseases. A medium is simply one in whose personal Ego, or terrestrial mind, (*psuche*), the percentage of "astral" light so preponderates as to impregnate with it their whole physical constitution. Every organ and cell thereby is attuned, so to speak, and subjected to an enormous and abnormal tension. The mind is ever on the plane of, and quite immersed in, that deceptive light whose *soul* is divine, but whose body—the light waves on the lower planes, infernal; for they are but the black and disfigured reflections of the earth's memories. The untrained eye of the poor sensitive cannot pierce the dark mist, the dense fog of the terrestrial

emanations, to see beyond in the radiant field of the eternal truths. His vision is out of focus. His senses, accustomed from his birth, like those of a native of the London slums, to stench and filth, to the unnatural distortions of sights and images tossed on the kaleidoscopic waves of the astral plane—are unable to discern the true from the false. And thus, the pale soulless corpses moving in the trackless fields of "Kama loka," appear to him the living images of the "dear departed" ones; the broken echoes of once human voices, passing through his mind, suggest to him well co-ordinated phrases, which he repeats, in ignorance that their final form and polish were received in the innermost depths of his own brain-factory. And hence the sight and the hearing of that which if seen in its true nature would have struck the medium's heart cold with horror, now fills him with a sense of beatitude and confidence. He really believes that the immeasurable vistas displayed before him are the real spiritual world, the abode of the blessed disembodied angels.

We describe the broad main features and facts of mediumship, there being no room in such an article for exceptional cases. We maintain—having unfortunately passed at one period of life *personally* through such experiences—that on the whole, mediumship is most dangerous; and *psychic* experiences when accepted indiscriminately lead only to honestly deceiving others, because the medium is the first self-deceived victim. Moreover, a too close association with the "Old Terrestrial Serpent" is infectious. The odic and magnetic currents of the Astral Light often incite to murder, drunkenness, immorality, and, as Eliphas Lévi expresses it, the not altogether pure natures "can be driven headlong by the blind forces set in motion in the *Light*"—by the errors and sins imposed on its waves.

And this is how the great Mage of the XIXth century corroborates the foregoing when speaking of the Astral Light:

> "We have said that to acquire magical power, two things are necessary: to disengage the will from all servitude, and to exercise it in control.
>
> "The sovereign will (of the adept) is represented in our symbols by the woman who crushes the serpent's head, and by the resplendent angel who represses the dragon, and holds him under his foot and spear; the great magical agent, the dual current of light, the living and astral *fire* of the earth, has been represented in the ancient theogonies by the serpent with the head of a bull, a ram, or a dog. It is the double serpent of the *caduceus,* it is the Old Serpent of *Genesis,* but it is also the *brazen serpent of Moses* entwined around

> the *tau,* that is to say, the generative *lingha.* It is also the goat of the witch-sabbath, and the Baphomet of the Templars; it is the *Hylé* of the Gnostics; it is the double-tailed serpent which forms the legs of the solar cock of the Abraxas: finally, it is the Devil of M. Eudes de Mirville. But in very fact it is the blind force which souls (*i.e.,* the lower *Manas* or Nephesh) have to conquer to liberate themselves from the bonds of the earth; for if their will does not free 'them from this *fatal attraction,* they will be absorbed in the current by the force which has produced them, and *will return to the central and eternal fire'.*"[6]

The "central and eternal fire" is that disintegrating Force, that gradually consumes and burns out the *Kama-rupa,* or "personality," in the Kama-loka, whither it goes after death. And verily, the Mediums are attracted by the astral light, it is the direct cause of their personal "souls" being absorbed "by the force which has produced" their terrestrial elements. And, therefore, as the same Occultist tells us:

> "All the magical operations consist in *freeing* one's self from the coils of the Ancient Serpent; then to place the foot on its head, and lead it according to the operator's will. 'I will give unto thee,' says the Serpent, in the Gospel myth, 'all the kingdoms of the earth, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' The initiated should reply to him, 'I will not fall down, but thou shalt crouch at my feet; thou wilt give me nothing, but I will make use of thee and take whatever I wish. For *I am thy Lord and Master!*' "

And as such, the *Personal Ego,* becoming at one with its divine parent, shares in the immortality of the latter. Otherwise. . . .

Enough, however. Blessed is he who has acquainted himself with the dual powers at work in the ASTRAL Light; thrice blessed he who has learned to discern the *Noëtic* from the *Psychic* action of the "Double-Faced" God in him, and who knows the potency of his own Spirit—or "Soul Dynamics."

There is one eternal Law in nature, one that always tends to adjust contraries and to produce final harmony. It is owing to this law of spiritual development superseding the physical and purely intellectual, that mankind will become freed from its false gods, and find itself finally—Self-Redeemed.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

---

[6] "Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie," quoted in "Isis Unveiled."

THE "A" FACTOR

IN fields of psychological research and investigation, one hears a great deal nowadays about what is commonly referred to as the "X" factor. This phrase or symbol is usually used to denote those *unknown quantities* in life and nature which present-day science is unable to explain. And these "unknowns," it would appear, are inevitable to a branch of learning which bases its calculations and deductions upon physical laws alone. Dealing with but the outposts of Nature, physical science contents itself with the outer shells of things, leaving unperceived the kernel of Reality, wherein lie wrapped all those laws and forces of life which pertain to the plane of causes. The purpose of this article, however, is not to deal specifically with the mysterious and unknown *X*, but with what we have chosen to call the "A" factor, as representing one phase or aspect of the unknown, which has long been known to Theosophy, and which will help to explain, no doubt, many things now enveloped in darkness.

Psychological literature has for years been speculating upon the meaning of what insurance companies call "accident-prone" individuals—involving the unexplained fact that some people literally *attract* to themselves accidents and misfortunes which, in number and nature, are out of all proportion to the so-called "laws of chance." Dr. Dunbar Flanders, noted woman psychiatrist and a leader in psychosomatic medicine, is quoted in *Life* for Feb. 19, 1945, as saying that "from 80 to 90 per cent of all accidents are due not to defective machinery, to a physical or mental defect, or to lack of skill in the worker, but to an X factor in the person injured." The X factor is defined in the *Life* article as being "the personality or emotional complex of the accident victim himself."

The teachings of Theosophy similarly assert that there is no such thing as "accident," in the common acceptation of the word, but that everything that happens, even the most sudden, is the result of *Karma,* the consequent effect of causes sown by the individual himself, either in this or a former incarnation. These causes lie hidden in that vast department of man's being which is, for the large part, unknown to present-day Psychology, and which Dr. Dunbar refers to as the "personality or emotional complex" of the accident victim himself. But does

this phrase serve to explain what the "emotional complex" is, or the nature of the causes there contained?

"A" stands for *association,* the kind of company one keeps. It is a subtle, magnetic factor in life which pertains to the moral, mental and psychic relationships that exist between all beings—especially between men and groups of men. It is a factor which serves either as shield and protector, standing over and guarding one's every act, or as a hazard, which opens him up to unknown species of danger and uncertainty. Were psychologists less materialistic in their views, they would discover perhaps that the *association factor* accounts for a considerable portion of the unknown X in the life of an individual, responsible for accidents. And conversely, it would follow that much of the merit and protection enjoyed by those favored with good fortune results from the same unseen cause. The bond of universal Brotherhood, which binds all things and beings in the entire cosmos into one grand Whole, is a basic and powerful law in life. Man's relationship to man, which is but an aspect of this law, applies in every particular, whether the relationship be that of individuals, groups, races or nations. Men influence, and are influenced by, every association in which they participate, and this, not just externally or through the interchange of ideas, but morally and karmically.

This law of Universal Brotherhood, of the orderly human relationships between men, cannot be ignored with impunity. Some, it is true, like the prodigal son who went out from his father's house, have sought to ignore it and to live for themselves alone. But personal self-assertion always brings disaster in the end. The selfish, separative individual, by the very attitude that he holds, cuts himself off from his fellow men. He becomes thereby a hazard to his neighbors, and sees them as hazards to himself—thus becoming deluded. Noble men and women, on the other hand, whose thoughts and acts always include others, receive directly the protection and support of the spiritual Hierarchy to which they belong, and become shields and benefactors to whomsoever they are with.

> "Man can neither propitiate nor command the Devas," it is said. But, by paralyzing his personality, and arriving thereby at the full knowledge of the *non-separateness* of his higher SELF from the One absolute SELF, man can, even during his terrestrial life, become as "One of Us." Thus it is, by eating of the fruit of knowledge which dis-

> pels ignorance, that man becomes like one of the Elohim or Dhyanis; and once on *their* plane the Spirit of Solidarity and perfect Harmony, which reigns in every Hierarchy, must extend over him and protect him in every particular. (*S.D.* I, 276.)

Might it be that the "accident prones" are individuals who have, in one way or another, placed themselves outside the protection of their "Heavenly Prototype"? Might it be that by an attitude of separateness, by a false sense of independence and self-sufficiency, one breaks the subtle threads of spiritual companionship? Feelings of indifference and neglect for the welfare of those with whom one is placed by Karma lead inevitably into the establishment of unnatural ties, and the keeping of bad company. And these, in turn, draw the Ego into surroundings and circumstances where it has no right to be—outside the protection of the Law. Fortune, victory, wealth and wise action, says *The Bhagavad-Gita,* are not possible except under the auspices and guidance of Krishna, man's Higher Self.

Dr. Lawrence L. LeShan, in the February, 1952 issue of *Psychiatry,* writes of the accident-prone persons as those who have only . . .

> Superficial ties with other human beings. These persons do not show warm emotional involvements with others. Their primary group relationships are weak and superficial. They have many acquaintances but no close friends. They may be married but do not feel much responsibility or relatedness of their families. Accident prones show marked anomie (disregard for law); they are social isolates for all their wide circle of acquaintances and companions. They are regarded generally as jovial and friendly, good conversationalists, but they cannot permit others to come close to them.

According to the teachings of Theosophy, a strong sense of family responsibility is absolutely essential to individual happiness and contentment, just as a strict regard for Law and an understanding warmth and relatedness to all men is necessary to harmonious adjustment in the community. But what have these virtues to do with "emotional involvements" with others? Is emotionalism ever a sign of stability or of healthy human relationships with one's fellow men, either inside or outside the family? Genuine warmth and relatedness between members of a family or of friends, which Dr. LeShan considers to be essential to true social adjustment, do not come from the personal, emotional man. True geniality, real cosmopolitanism, are of Spirit alone—expressions of the Divine Ego in man—and they require for their vehicles minds

filled with brotherly feelings and unselfish purposes, with a strict regard for Law.

"Tell me the company you keep and I'll tell you what you are," says an old Dutch proverb. Sages do not choose the company of thieves, except for reasons of instruction or compassion, nor does the striver for perfection place himself unthinkingly in the midst of those whom he knows to be wickedly impure. But because every human being is a compound of both good and evil, or because of unseen karmic threads from the past, even the most excellent devotee is sometimes drawn unwittingly into relationships which possess a power to pull him down. Not necessarily so, of course, for no man can be forced to act against his will; but certainly if he allows the old dying fire of faulty companionship to be rekindled, he lives among dangerous shadows. These may be but fleeting reminders of lessons learned in times gone by, and the Karma of such association need not extend beyond the physical plane unless we give the shadows new feeling and new encouragement.

Among the *Aphorisms on Karma,* by Wm. Q. Judge, are two that deal specifically with cataclysms. Upon examination, however, it will be found that these Aphorisms are equally applicable to "accidents," so-called, for, essentially, the factors entering into them both are the same. The primary difference between cataclysms and accidents is in the number of persons affected and the extent of the area of operation. Just as "a cataclysm may be traced to an immediate physical cause such as internal fire and atmospheric disturbance" (Aphorism 30), so also may most accidents be traced to the objective physical causes; and this is as far as materialistic thinkers go in their attempt to explain either. "But," adds the Aphorism, "these [physical causes] have been brought on by the disturbance created through the dynamic power of human thought." It is this dynamic power of human thought, accompanied, as it always is, by feelings, attitudes and motives, that is the X factor behind all human, and even natural, events. With a knowledge of the laws governing the occult Cosmos, and the unseen subjective causes that lie behind all cataclysms and individual human misfortunes, it is evident that neither can be regarded as really *accidental,* but rather as the result of the operation of intelligent and unerring Law. Under this doctrine, neither calamity nor misfortune, however great or small, can touch an individual whose thinking has no affinity with the line of causation which brought it on. Aphorism 31 states that "Egos who

have no Karmic connection with a portion of the globe where a cataclysm is coming on are kept without the latter's operation in two ways: *(a)* by repulsion acting on their inner nature, and *(b)* by being called and warned by those who watch the progress of the world."

The quality of thought and feeling which either involves a person in accidents and cataclysms or keeps him without their operation is determined by the degree of unity one feels with the whole of Life. The fundamental Law of Life is Harmony for the whole, and those who think and act from this basis bring themselves under the protective or preservative aspect of the Law; those who violate the Law by opposing their personal and egotistical wills to the One Universal and Impersonal Will become focal points for the outlet of the disharmony, which they themselves have created. They fall, as it were, under the destructive aspect of the Law; but even this, in the long run, is beneficent, since the purpose of the Law is to adjust—to re-establish equilibrium in the Occult Cosmos.

The Laws of Morality

All crime must in the long run bring punishment, for in the long run, given immortality, we must find that our true good is incompatible with crime. Thus punishment asserts a supremacy of the law, as sin does of the individual will. Here we have a contradiction which is solved when the punishment attains its end and reconciles our will to the law.

This process can be repeated indefinitely. For virtue might again become "immediate" as innocence once more, only innocence on a higher level. I suppose the reward of virtue gained in one life is always just the being able to start fresh as a superior kind of baby when one is born (*cf.* Rabbi Ben Ezra, "Fearless and Unperplexed"), and so you might go on from innocence through crime, punishment, repentance, virtue, to innocence again, until you had got as high as morality can carry you.

—J. E. McTaggart

WORD PUZZLES

THE English language—as every language to some degree—contains many terms useful in speaking of Theosophy. Any word which signifies or even *implies* the existence of a transcendent "Inner Man" is, or could be, a natural part of theosophic vocabulary, for the fundamental affirmation of Theosophy is that such an inner man exists—the real Self in us all—and that it can come to know more about itself.

Near the beginning of such a theosophical lexicon, for instance, is the word Altruism, derived from a root meaning simply "other people," and connoting "with regard for and devotion to, the interests of others as an ethical principle; as opposed to *egoism* or *selfishness,*" according to *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary.* The chief "puzzle" in regard to contemporary usage of this term lies in the fact that "altruism" is so often mentioned with overtones of derision. Part of the explanation for this phenomenon comes easily enough: self-styled altruists are suspect for the same reason that any man who proudly claims lofty motives can be seen to be much more interested in the impression he makes than in the supposed object of his devotion. Another reason why "altruism" is a term requiring careful handling is that the psychological scientists have unearthed a good deal of convincing evidence that numerous pseudo-"altruists," like the devotees of many a theology, throw themselves into "good works" in order to forget a responsibility to solve some crucial personal problems.

If the man thus focussing his attention "outward" *were* actually able to be inwardly concerned over those to whom he is presumably devoted, such criticism would not arise. But the fact is that many in this category have little of either love or understanding for their fellows, a buried struggle within themselves absorbing the real vitality of a life's meditation. When a psychologist claims that innumerable case histories show how neurotic patients fail to show *sufficient* interest in their own problems, he is not asserting that genuine concern for others is a neurotic symptom, but only that numerous "do-gooders" suffer a host of neurotic complexes.

Psychiatrist Karen Horney, in one of her latest works, *Neurosis and Human Growth,* clarifies this point, indicating the many times when

a man or woman who endeavors to submerge himself in socially commendable activities is a rather incapable altruist, precisely because some of his own distortions of personality have not been faced and corrected. The "shirking of responsibility for self" she writes, "lowers the creative potential of the individual." The inner self is operating at low frequency, and "when the real self is 'locked out' and exiled, one's *integrating power* will be at a low ebb." These are the complications present in many average representations of "altruism," and must be granted. (Dr. Horney herself also grants "genuine elements besides the more obviously grandiose ones" as often being mixed into "self-sacrificial" behavior). The point is, though, that "love," in its deepest sense, and "sacrifice," in its merely *literal* sense, are not one and the same thing. Miss Horney further remarks concerning the neurotic "altruist":

> His not being an active determining factor in his own life creates a deep feeling of uncertainty, no matter how much overlaid by compulsive rigidities. His not feeling his own feelings makes him unalive, no matter how great his surface vivacity. His not assuming responsibility for himself robs him of true inner independence. In addition, the inactivity of his real self has a significant influence upon the course of the neurosis. It is a hopeful sign if energies, though unavailable for his personal life, are put into constructive efforts for others. Needless to say, such efforts can be and are made by well-integrated people. But those who interest us here show a striking discrepancy between seemingly limitless energies spent in the service of others and a lack of constructive interest or concern for their own personal lives.

Thus we have the puzzling phenomenon of the man who appears to be an "altruist" demanding a great deal of appreciation for his efforts. He does this because what he is really after is an improvement in his own self-esteem, currently at low ebb because of failure to face and solve some of his own problems and conflicts. Miss Horney continues:

> . . . Varying with his temperament, his neurotic structure, and the situation, he may be charming, compliant, considerate, sensitive to wishes of others, available, helpful, sacrificing, understanding. It is but natural that he overrates what, in this or that way, he does for another person. He is oblivious to the fact that the latter may not at all like this kind of attention or generosity; he is unaware that there are strings attached to his offers; he omits from his consideration all the unpleasant traits he has. And so it all appears to

him as the pure gold of friendliness, for which he could reasonably expect returns.

When H.P.B. suggested that the work of the Theosophical Society should be aimed at accomplishing a "brotherhood *in actu* and not merely in name," and also spoke of altruism as the quintessence of the theosophical life, she was not unaware of the hypocritical role which *verbal* altruism so often plays. Her *Key to Theosophy* excoriates those of the wealthy and privileged who pride themselves on their donations to the poor and their subscriptions to organized charities:

> Where's the gratitude which your "millions of pounds" should have called forth, or the good feelings provoked by them? Do your helpless old men and women thank you for the workhouses; or your poor for the poisonously unhealthy dwellings in which they are allowed to breed new generations of diseased, scrofulous and rickety children, only to put money into the pockets of the insatiable Shylocks who own houses? Therefore it is that every sovereign of all those "millions," contributed by good and would-be charitable people, falls like a burning curse instead of a blessing on the poor whom it should relieve. We call this *generating national Karma,* and terrible will be its results on the day of reckoning.

Altruism, then like brotherhood, can exist "in name only," and there is a world of difference between this and altruism *"in actu."*

The separation of the genuinely ethical spirit from stylized descriptions of supposed moral conduct takes us far back into past history. For moderns, medieval Christianity is a dramatic example of this separation, carried to an extreme and reaching its apotheosis in Torquemada's Inquisition. With the Holy Office, any action theoretically designed to "save souls" was altruistic. Deviation of thought from orthodoxy was a heinous crime, whereas burning and torturing at the stake became entirely justifiable. But neither Christianity nor any single religious tradition can be held accountable for the distortion and misuse of the altruism concept. Whenever a man sees *either* good or evil as inherent in words or deeds, he has acquired a split morality and is a potential hypocrite—at least for all those who see, with the ancients, that nobility is a psychological and not a factual affair.

Joseph Shipley's *Dictionary of Word Origins* gives a rather more interesting and informative discussion of altruism than that supplied by Webster:

> The Fr. expression *le bien d'autrui,* the right of another, was shortened in legal phrase to *l'autrui.* The philosopher Comte took

this shorter term (possibly from the It. form *altrui,* from L. *alteri,* to another) and coined the noun *altruisme*—translated into Eng. as *altruism.* Comte opposed it to *egoism,* from L. *ego,* I. *Egoism* is the general philosophical point of view; *egotism* (the same word, with the *t* added to separate the vowels) has come to be used for a more personal selfishness, a conceit, a too frequent using of the word I.

Le bien d'autrui had its origination as a philosophical and ethical concern for what H.P.B. calls the "slightest invasion" of another's right. What, in terms of altruism, are the fundamental rights of man? Behind all conceptions of political liberty and economic security is the right of man to be interpreted, first, even if only tentatively, according to *his own philosophy* and standard of values. Unless we are able to attempt this, eager to find, in anyone, a portion of ourselves—unless understanding can bridge the gap between greatly different versions of proper opinion and conduct—we are "altruists" in name only.

Therefore it is that one of the foci for effort in the Theosophical Movement of present and future lies in reinterpreting and revivifying the higher altruism of Buddhi-Manasic understanding. The basis of the Theosophical Society encouraged a friendly comparative study of unfamiliar religious beliefs. And this modulus clearly can be extended to include an *attempt* to understand sympathetically every opinion or form of conduct divergent from prevailing norms.

An interesting question presents itself to those who have been steeped in H. P. Blavatsky's writings. Namely, can a "materialist" or an orthodox religionist be an altruist? H.P.B. certainly insists upon recognizing that the doctrine of irresponsibility, whether appearing under the heading of "cosmogenesis in chaos," or under the heading of "salvation by special intervention," militates against altruism—the latter depending upon a strong feeling of individual responsibility. The answer, here, as always, must be that ships flying all manner of flags can have sound bottoms, but that, in matters of religion or militant "all-denying" skepticism, some flags flap so wildly that they tangle with the sails.

When a person has a Program for helping others, this is not necessarily so good. Like the quality of mercy, the quality of altruism cannot be reached by straining. When one does have a "program" for rendering assistance, it is often the success of the program itself which becomes uppermost in mind, and perhaps in the light of this psychological sequence we are best able to understand why so many "charities" go

awry. Another interesting aspect of the weakness accompanying organized charity programs is the way in which folk are easily bilked by men representing spurious causes. So eager are we to participate (tax deductibly) in something which can salve our feelings of guilt for much irresponsibility during the past, that we often become easy dupes.

Allan Keller, a New York *World-Telegram* staff writer, recently told of the rapidly growing business of fake charity organizations which, taking advantage of "the Christmas spirit," wheedle untold millions of dollars each year from unwary individuals. Defending the "legitimate charities that are making their regular appeals for public support" at Christmas time, this article warns against "charity hustlers and racketeers who ask for everything from pennies to hundreds of dollars." Keller continues:

> For every Christmas carol that is sung, and every holiday story that is told to the children, there are five or ten slick artists with glib tongues who are making sure that Santa doesn't pass them by.
>
> "Gimme a quarter" and "Don't you want to be one of those backing this worthwhile enterprise with a real gift?" are cut from the same cloth. The pattern is identical; only the size differs with the person who has been marked down as a sucker.
>
> Experts in welfare circles guess that despite all warnings New Yorkers will donate more than $10,000,000—the figure may be much higher because most people don't like to admit they have been "taken" —before the new year rolls around.
>
> Most of the money will go in driblets to individuals using authentic-looking letterheads or to solicitors who talk blandly of camps for kids, outings for the underprivileged, parties, dinners and entertainments that just never seem to materialize.

In discussing the dangers and evils of organized charity, and the giving of money through third persons, H. P. Blavatsky had the following suggestions to offer:

> Act individually and not collectively . . . The Theosophical ideas of charity mean *personal* exertion for others; *personal* mercy and kindness; *personal* interest in the welfare of those who suffer; *personal* sympathy, forethought and assistance in their troubles or needs. We Theosophists do not believe in giving money through other people's hands or organizations. We believe in giving to the money a thousand-fold greater power and effectiveness by our personal contact and sympathy with those who need it. We believe in relieving the starvation of the soul, as much if not more than the emptiness of the

stomach; for gratitude does more good to the man who feels it, than to him for whom it is felt.

The word "uplift" has definitely become a word of derision, and immediately calls to mind a bevy of busybodies intruding in many aspects of community life—ostensibly for the good of humanity, but actually in attempts to assuage their own loneliness and lack of self-reliance. What this word *could* mean is something so different that what has been said concerning "altruism" is both paralleled and thrown into sharper relief. The Theosophist, for instance, could refer "uplift" to H.P.B.'s statements in the *Key* concerning the duty of Theosophists to seek to improve the environment of unfortunates living in ignorance and misery. "True evolution teaches us," she writes in a passage so often quoted, "that by altering the surroundings of the organism we can alter and improve the organism; and in the strictest sense this is true with regard to man."

Why then is it that we so often, so easily and spontaneously, are pained by the word "uplift"? Perhaps because many of those with whom we associate "uplift" work *pride* themselves on being altruists: pride is a difficult foe to conquer, resourceful and persistent. One cannot be an altruist and prideful both, for pride means preoccupation with self and altruism means concern for others. There is, we may well suspect, something subtle and mysterious about the "higher" altruism. Altruism is not a matter of specific deeds, nor is it an ideal. Regarded as an idea, it becomes identified with conventional conceptions of virtue, and this is also misleading. Apparently, whenever man regards altruism as a virtue he loses part of its real meaning. As Judge wrote, "Altruism is not so much an ideal as a matter of practice."

Another hidden question about "concern for others" is whether the "concern" is positive or negative in nature. Some are interested in troubles and sufferings to divert their attention from their own, and these may easily accept the whole of human existence as a "misery-go-round." One who has an affirmative philosophy of life, though, an orientation which suggests the possibility of a better world which may be brought to birth, brings a rich gift to all whom he contacts, though he never meddles in the personal problems of another. The greatest of all gifts of this sort, in the opinion of Theosophists, is that of a philosophy showing infinite potentialities for human progress during the whole cycle of manvantaric evolution.

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK—AND ANSWER

WHY are so many successful artists and writers, although they are valuable to society, so unhappy?

(a) If one were really successful, could he be unhappy? It would seem that the only fully successful people in this world are Masters of Wisdom—balanced geniuses. They have succeeded in developing every part of their natures, and their perspectives are free from the distortions of doubt. And here would seem to be one secret of the question—so many artists and writers are proficient in their particular field and lacking in other fields, but must sense and regret the consequences of too much specialization. For lives, it must be, they have continued to follow the path of their talent—the path of least resistance, so to say—to the neglect of other qualities. Now, many lives later, we see a person extremely brilliant in one line of endeavor and definitely lacking in other essential character traits. From the perspective of the Higher Self this must be disturbing. Such people's unhappiness would seem to arise from a certain realization within that there is this unbalance. They must often find themselves among others who fail to appreciate their talents, or whose they cannot appreciate.

One also has to consider what is normal. What most people consider normal is far from true sanity. Normal is often considered to be merely what the majority of people exhibit as characteristic. So from such standards any soul actually "striving for perfection" might be considered abnormal. To achieve lasting happiness it would seem necessary to maintain a higher standard than that widely prevalent in the world today. To maintain a standard such as Theosophy offers, one tries to acquire that happiness which can only come from improving our capacities for every task presented to us.

(b) This is an age when happiness is the exception to the rule, and pretense of happiness the rule. People live a life centered in changeable and unstable realms—passions, desires and a carload of things. Yet only when they focus upon unchanging or universally purposeful values will they begin to let go the unhappiness of clutching at shadows.

Can we expect to find artists and writers above these confusions? Of course, they often do have a facility of thought and expression which should carry them to an examination of unseen basic themes of

life. Yet, even so, good artists and writers need to be inspirational and have high ideals, always looking for an expression of things as they truly are (not as they seem) or as they would exist in a perfect plan. Lacking these, it is possible to be caught in a swirl of feelings and impressions, and having missed the "plan of life," there is only unhappiness.

If writers and artists have a greater than average facility for feeling, (sensitivity), this might also increase unhappiness. For unusual skills and abilities can be the means of strengthening the lower personal man as well as the higher ego. Also, a great writer may not appear happy in the way we think of happiness, for wisdom and vision bring on a sorrow for the ignorance abroad in the world. So we might question what a "successful" person is and what our idea of happiness is. But we may learn from any who have obviously had the experience that the greatest happiness is in and working for "all," leaving the just Law to manage results. The Masters of Wisdom, it is said, have learned such happiness. Such beings have apparently developed all their faculties to their fullest, and in a balanced way they are the truly great artists, writers, etc., who are most valuable to society.

(c) It seems necessary first of all to establish a standard by which such relative conditions as "successful" and "unhappy" can be analyzed and to some extent understood in terms of their relative importance. If we can determine what creative efforts are truly "valuable to society," or rather the qualities which (depending on their predominance) make an artistic work either "a little" valuable or very much so, it then becomes possible to decide, at least speculatively, what sorts of writers and artists are apt to be "successful" and "happy"—or "unhappy."

The establishment of such a standard was evidently considered necessary by H.P.B., for in 1880, in her article, "The Tidal Wave," published in *Lucifer,* she posited that "a new race of authors," valuable authors, was springing up, and that they could be distinguished from "those fogies of yore . . . who repeat obstinately and parrot-like the old literary formulae and hold desperately to publishers' traditions." The former are to be recognized, she said, as those who see the "new intellectual needs" of society—the thoughts which can vitalize much needed "spiritual and psychic changes." Second, the valuable and in a sense successful writer is he who "lifts boldly and carries on unflinchingly the standard of the *Future Man.*"

Perhaps all those ideals are yet *realities* deep-seated in the heart of every one, and proclaim man a being of infinite dignity, rights, and beneficent strength, if and when he realizes his *divine nature.* He can, looking at things this way, become a living power—a constructive force for good in the world. Thus any creative artist, deriving his faculties of expression and to some extent his inspiration from the "higher" aspect of every man's nature, who fails to participate at least to some degree in "the Tidal Wave" of further awakening, may easily feel an unhappiness and uneasiness of considerable proportions.

How can Theosophists guard themselves against the danger of becoming too "intellectual"? It may be that it is just as bad to be not "intellectual" enough as to be too much so. But how can one tell when the line of balance is passed in either direction?

The intellect is definitely a necessary part of man's evolution and could not possibly dominate a man's nature if it is always used as an instrument, a servant of the soul. One *may* lapse into an acceptance of the philosophy of intellectualism, which depends upon the premise that knowledge is wholly derived by the exercise of reason—that reason is the only decisive expositor of reality.

It is said of the soul that it "has reasons of its own, of which reason knows nothing." The 7th chapter of *The Ocean of Theosophy* designates that the intellect is the lower aspect of dual *Manas,* the Thinker, the higher aspect being the intuitional, which knows, and does not depend on reason. The intellect is nearer the principle of Desire, while intuition has an affinity for the higher spiritual principles. So we see that the "line of balance" becomes that subtle field of battle which we encounter daily in our activities and relationships.

Perhaps the key lies in the *use* of intellect as an instrument rather than in the attitude of intellectuality. Surely the correct use of the intellect is in enlarging one's understanding of other beings. One of the means of doing this is by developing sympathy, by identifying oneself with others, without losing the perspective that is more or less natural to the observer. Perhaps the function of intellect is to make the distinctions relative to this perspective, then to apply what is learned at one level of experience to other levels. H.P.B. maintained that the use of correspondence and analogy were fundamental in the mastery of the Wisdom-religion. In other words, intellect, properly

used, is creative, so that we feel that our thinking is increasing our sphere of understanding and our ability to help our fellows. "Intellectuality" is characteristically not creative. It is preoccupied with distinctions, rather than concerned with live human beings and with applications.

What might be the value of giving one's life for a principle? What factors might enter the case in deciding?

Value for one's self? Value for others? In either case, what nature and level of value? If affirming allegiance to one's Higher Self be the "level," a person can hardly separate himself from others, for, to quote a theosophic maxim: "The Higher Self of one is the Higher Self of all." Another dimension of value to be considered, however, is that of self-interest or self-salvation—the "dynamic" of Christian theology. In George Bernard Shaw's *Androcles and the Lion,* for example, the prospect of martyrdom as viewed by Christian heretics, even though it meant violent, savage death by hungry wild beasts in the great arena of Rome, nevertheless represented the straightest route to eternal bliss at the right hand of God. Theosophically speaking, the "value" or merit thus gained was devoid of bountiful "soul-benefits," excepting, perhaps, in terms of strong will-development. For no matter how impressive the sacrifice *seemed,* it was nevertheless subtly motivated by self-interest. Thus purity of motive is a prime factor in the true giving of one's self.

It is the trial of Socrates (see *Apology* and *Crito*), if interpreted esoterically, which offers a theosophic orientation on the subject of self-sacrifice. For to Socrates—who had based his long life of over seventy years on principled action—the actual giving up of life was a bit irrelevant, or at least beside the main issue. The important thing while in a body was "to fulfill the philosopher's mission of searching into myself and other men. . . ," a command issued to Socrates by "the inner God." There could be no compromise on this, for as Socrates addressed his accusers at the ancient court of Athens: "A man who is good for anything ought not to calculate the chance of living or dying; he ought only to consider whether in doing anything he is doing right or wrong —acting the part of a good man or of a bad." Such consideration was aided in his case, he admits, by "a kind of voice, first come to me when I was a child; it always forbids but never commands me to do anything

which I am going to do." Since compromise to secure personal survival would mean a form of self-interest, Socrates calmly accepted the alternative penalty of death, proving himself equal to a final test of the sage by facing the decree serenely.

From a theosophic view, "the God" of Plato represents man's common heritage, the divine, intuitive light within, focussing through intuition. This beacon must be sought out and cognized, for it points to the mission and karma before each man. The calm or "security" of Socrates can thus be achieved by all men, through a recognition and working out of the particular tasks at hand in this life, and a reliance on karmic law regarding the future. We speak of the "sign" or "voice" which guided Socrates as conscience, and of course it is of real importance to listen to this voice.

The story of Socrates is related here, among other reasons, to indicate that it is not just a question of "giving one's life" through one single and final act for a principle. It's just not that simple. In the first place it takes lots of practice of will to be *able* to consciously give up life, a practice in altruism to do it for the right reasons. The second thing is that in terms of *value* to one's Self and others, the returns will surely be best if one can live *for* a principle instead of dying upon it, although we must admit it is much tougher to live by principle all the time—at least it takes more endurance. Should our modern culture place us in a "life-or-death situation" depending on moral choices, an honest decision would be based on two criteria. First: Where, in rational terms, does one's supreme duty lie, where is one's Karma, where can the greatest good be accomplished? Second: Does the first answer check with the "voice" of Socrates—the standard of pure motive?

In the final analysis, then, value does not exist in the physical acts of living or dying. The value is in terms of *being able* to give up that which is most dear. Thus with one individual the lesson necessary for soul-growth might be the relinquishment of a desire to *give up* life. An example of this would be the "Buddhas of selfishness," who seek escape from all earthly imperfection by gaining nirvanic bliss. We hardly need an example for the converse of this, for we all know of the man who fears death and thus is eternally seeking material security.

IN BEHALF OF THE GNOSTICS

ACCORDING to Christian statistics compiled by Joachim of Flora, a Cistercian monk (1132-1202) who was depressed by the decline of morality in the Church and its holy orders, the thirteenth century was to mark the break-up and defeat of Christianity by the anti-Christ, a disaster to be quickly followed by a glorious revival of the spirit of religion—"an evolution in men's consciences and in the whole body of Christianity," as Emile Gebhart described Joachim's prophetic dream. The ascetic monk of the future would preside over this religious renaissance—he, by awakened spiritual intelligence, would decipher and understand the Eternal Gospel. It is the monk, Joachim predicted, the perfect Christian, to whom the future belongs, in whom knowledge will blossom:

> It is he who will reconcile, in the transcendent faith of the Spirit, all the great religious families of the human race; he will be the bond of union between the Church of the west and the Church of the east. His apostolate will cover the whole earth; he will touch the hearts of the heathen, and he will bring old Israel, weary of long revolt, into the fold of the eternal church. . . . Joachim's . . . view, the completion of religion in the bosom of Christianity itself, but a sublimated Christianity, disengaged from the narrow letter, purified by the Spirit —this view was well calculated to rejoice the Italian conscience, which the heretical sects never succeeded in detaching from the old faith. Italy willingly heard the announcement of the fall of the clerical order, the temporal Holy See and the secular Church, whose pastoral function would pass to the contemplative and to the saints . . . (Emile Gebhart, *Mystics and Saints in Italy,* London, 1922).

The impatient and heretical Joachim died in 1202, unable to witness the failure of his prophecy, his dream of a sudden access of mystical wisdom that would put to rout the forces of evil. Yet he came by his delusion honorably, from pain at the sight of human suffering, and his fitting of a "great awakening" into the Christian theory of history—he adapted the promised Millennium to his idea of "full intelligence" for mankind—was the act of a man who was tired of theological and other oppressions. He wrote glowingly of the age to come—"the age of the Holy Ghost, of whom the apostle said: 'Where is the Spirit of the Lord, there is liberty'."

Joachim's great longing for the perfection of man on earth has been recalled to mind by a modern historian who sees in such hopes the root of practically all modern evil. The historian is Eric Voegelin of Louisiana State University, whose volume, *The New Science of Politics,* was recently made the text of a pretentious analysis of current political and international disorders by *Time* Magazine (*Time,* March 9). Joachim, *Time* agrees, "was, in fact, the first Christian to pervert the hope of salvation into a systematic belief in an earthly society of purified and perfected men." Thus Joachim is identified as the heresiarch from whom we may trace all perfectionist ideology, all totalitarianisms, all insistent tyrannies. Following Voegelin, *Time* recites the "error" of Joachim:

> Joachim, not finding materials for his formula in Greek or Christian thought, turned to another source: Gnosticism. A Gnostic is one who seeks to rise above nature and find salvation through "hidden knowledge" rather than through faith and works. Ten centuries before Joachim, Christianity in a hard struggle had driven underground a host of Gnostic sects, but enough Gnosticism survived in Joachim's day to supply material for his formula. The 2nd century Gnostic magicians had been interested in personal salvation, not in social or political progress. Joachim transferred some of their methods and attitudes to the problem of social progress raised by 12th century vigor. Voegelin applies the name gnostic to Joachim and to many present-day doctrines and attitudes. . . . Joachim believed that the story of man on earth was divided into three periods or realms, each corresponding to a person of the Trinity. The Third Realm, said Joachim, was about to begin with the appearance of the *Dux e Babylone.* (In terms of modern Gnosticism, the leader from Babylon would be called Superman or Der Fuhrer, or "the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of the democratic centralism of the Party.")
>
> The Third Realm was to be characterized by wisdom, and after the Third Realm's beginning (set by Joachim for the year 1260), men would soon be so perfect that they would not need any Dux or government or discipline. (Marx's translation: After the triumph of scientific socialism in the classless society, the state would "wither away" because men, purged of the evil of class conflict, would not need it.)
>
> Joachim's Third Realm corrupted the Christian idea by promising perfections on earth; it also transgressed the limits Plato had set upon the state and upon men's tendency to alter the higher truths of philosophy and religion to fit political or material ends. Militarily, Mongol absolutism entered the West through Hungary; philosophically, political absolutism re-entered the West through Joachim.

> Joachim's invasion was more devastating because the anti-Christian attempt to embrace salvation on earth went beyond Genghis and other primitive societies, and was to produce despotisms and perversions of truth worse than primitive society ever knew. . . . In the 18th century, Gnostic activists became openly anti-Christian. The French Revolution, crowning a Goddess of Reason in Notre Dame and proclaiming man's ability to achieve his salvation on earth, established Gnosticism as the religion of a large number of Western intellectuals and people.

Here, somewhat abbreviated, is the Voegelin (or *Time*) thesis. It stands squarely on an unfair use of the term Gnostic, an exceedingly strained version of Joachim's Christian Utopianism, and the familiar Christian dogma of the imperfectibility of man.

Let us look, first, at the Gnostics, those much misrepresented men of the early days of Christianity, of whom we know chiefly through the attacks of their orthodox Christian adversaries. The Gnostics did believe in "hidden knowledge." *Gnosis,* according to Theodotus, is "the knowledge of who we were, what we have become, where we were, into what place we have been thrown; whither we are hastening, whence we are redeemed; and what is birth, what is re-birth." (Hastings' *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.*) It is evident, also, that the Gnostics believed that man could possess power—power obtained through knowledge—so that the "prayers" of the Gnostics were rather invocations than supplications. In *Forerunners and Rivals of Christianity,* we find Legge, not a sympathetic witness, saying:

> From the first, the Catholic Church seemed to have recognized that the ideas which lay at the root of Gnosticism—to which word I have ventured to give a meaning more extended than that which it connotes in heresiological writers—were opposed to religion altogether; and if allowed to triumph would have had their end in the development of a science, which, if not absolutely atheistic, would at least reduce the necessary action of the spiritual world upon this to the vanishing point.

The point, of course, here, is that the Gnostics were unwilling to regard themselves as at the mercy of the "spiritual world." It seems plain enough that the Gnostics were in large part the continuers of the ancient Greek mystery schools, especially those of the Orphici, and that they represented what occultism was known at all to the early Christians. In *Isis Unveiled,* H. P. Blavatsky shows plainly enough that practically all the notions of Christian theology were borrowed from

the Gnostic teachings, and then distorted. (See chapters VII and VIII of Vol. II.)

Concerning the opposition of Catholic Christianity to the Gnostics, the Hastings' *Encyclopedia,* while staunchly orthodox in position, has this to say:

> That the Church was compelled to set itself in uncompromising antagonism to the Gnostic movement was in many ways a misfortune. Not only was it thus deprived of influences that would have proved helpful, but it suffered a partial arrest of development. The extravagance of Gnosticism was only the other side of that freedom which was the birthright of Christianity, and which breathes through the NT [New Testament] like a living air. To check the inroads of Gnosticism the Church had to prohibit freedom. Dogma was made rigid; the idea of new revelation was forbidden; ecclesiastical government became official and oppressive. The contrast between the 3rd and 4th centuries and the primitive period affords us a measure of the loss which the Church sustained by its triumph over heresy. . . .

Today, the Gnostics are an unchampioned minority of nearly two thousand years ago, remembered chiefly for their alleged "mistakes," and who are now made the "whipping boy" of a modern political scientist whose glib analogies serve as the basis for a new type of political criticism. What is the real complaint against the Gnostics? Surely not that they sought power! *Time,* and doubtless Professor Voegelin, say that the interest of the Gnostics was in "salvation," and not "social progress." Their great offense, transmitted to later generations, was that they regarded man as a perfectible being. They did not look upon him as fatally marked by the Original Sin, and dependent upon the irrational resolves of his "Creator."

If lust for power were the thing that was wrong with the Gnostics, then, plainly, it is the Roman Church which ought to be indicted, and not their learned and gentle victims, for it was Rome which rose to power by means of the methods adopted by loyal servitors of Catholic Christianity to suppress and outlaw the Gnostic heresies.

There need be no particular quarrel with Professor Voegelin's technique of analysis—the endeavor to trace leading conceptions about man, nature, and progress, and to interpret historical events in this way, regardless of the changing labels borne by these ideas. The method is an effective one and should be used more widely. But it ought to be more carefully applied. In the first place, true Gnostics

never founded an omnipotent State like the Holy Roman Empire, like the nightmare of Nazi rule, like the empire directed from the Kremlin. The Gnostic may believe that knowledge exists, and may be obtained, but he is not in the least interested in the bloodier forms of coercion. Further, Professor Voegelin (or at least *Time*) seems to have drawn no searching comparison between the idea of man as held by the Gnostics and the idea of man maintained by those he terms "modern Gnostics"—the directors of autocratic Utopias. The complaint against the ancient Gnostics is really that they assigned *too much* dignity to man. They claimed for him power, and did not teach submissiveness to an outside deity. Yet those who are claimed to have followed the Gnostic "line" in modern times insist that man is nothing, the State everything. So, also, to draw a more accurate parallel, has been the contention of the omnipotent Church of Western medieval history—man is a sinner, a "nothing," worthy of no more than eternal torment, unless he agrees to ally himself and lose himself in the Mother Church, which is "everything."

So far as we can tell, Prof. Voegelin has done little more by his analysis than to draw up a superficially impressive apologetic for Christian orthodoxy. The *Christian Century,* for one thing, is duly impressed, hailing *The New Science of Politics* as a "vastly learned series of lectures" which is "concerned with verities." Liberal critics, however, are more wary. A reviewer in *Frontier,* West Coast political monthly, for instance, cites the following passage from Voegelin:

> A democratic government is not supposed to become an accomplice in its own overthrow by letting Gnostic movements grow prodigiously in the shelter of a muddy interpretation of civil rights, and if through inadvertence such a movement has grown to the danger point of capturing existential representation by the famous legality of popular elections, a democratic government is not supposed to bow to the will of the people but to put down the danger by force and, if necessary, to break the letter of the constitution in order to save its spirit.

A democratic reviewer is naturally troubled by such talk, even if Gnostic, in Mr. Voegelin's text, is meant to be read "Communist" or Nazi" or "Falangist" or whatever the current label for authoritarian evil. But the real trouble with all such intellectual sabre-rattling is that it ignores the real cause of political totalisms, which lies in centuries of denial of the spiritual nature of man. It seems clear enough, Theosophically speaking, that the Karma of the West, so far as what

we call "totalitarianism" is concerned, is the Karma of ages of degradation of the human spirit. Finally, angry revolutionists try to make the degradation "official." This, as H. P. Blavatsky made clear in her illuminating article, "The Fall of Ideals," is the logical consequence of the religious dogmas of human weakness and human imperfection to which the West has been for so long exposed. Not the long-suffering and much maligned Gnostics, but their enemies and oppressors, are responsible. We now have a term for the terrible reaction so feared by the modern world—the "Revolution of Nihilism,"—and we shall never be able to escape from its sweep of hate and violence until we honestly examine into its causes and origin. As H.P.B. said:

> . . . from the mire of modern civilization, fecund bed of contrasting virtues. . . . sprouted the germs which ultimately developed into All-denying protestators, Atheists, Nihilists, and Anarchists, Men of the Terror. Bad, violent, criminal some of them may be, yet no one of them could stand as the copy of Satan; but taking this heart-broken, hopeless, embittered portion of humanity in their collectivity, they are just Satan himself; for he is the ideal synthesis of all discordant forces and each separate human vice or passion is but an atom of his totality. In the very depths of the heart of this HUMAN Satanic totality burns the divine spark, all negations notwithstanding. It is called LOVE FOR HUMANITY, an ardent aspiration for a universal reign of Justice—hence a latent desire for light, harmony and goodness. Where do we find such a divine spark among the proud and wealthy? In respectable Society and the correct orthodox, so-called religious portion of the public, one finds but a predominating selfishness and a desire for wealth at the expense of the weak and the destitute, hence, as parallel, indifference to injustice and evil. Freedom, or Liberty, is but a vain word just now all over the civilized globe; freedom is but a cunning synonym for oppression of the people in the name of the people, and it exists for castes, never for units. Before Satan, the incarnate PROTEST, repents and reunites with his fellow men in one common Brotherhood, all cause for protest must have disappeared from earth. And that can come to pass only when Greed, Bias, and Prejudice shall have disappeared before the elements of Altruism and Justice to all.
>
> But this is a Utopia—for the present. It cannot take place before the castes of the modern *Levites* and their theology—the Dead-sea fruit of Spirituality—shall have disappeared. . . .

ON THE LOOKOUT

Further Recognition of Judge

Last month's Lookout took note of C. Jinarajadasa's friendly attitude toward Wm. Q. Judge in his speech as retiring President of the Theosophical Society. We are glad that this note appeared when it did, for we learn that Mr. Jinarajadasa died on June 18, and it is a pleasant thought that he thus evaluated fairly Judge's place in Theosophical history before he left the scene. We now call attention to a brief article of similar significance on the relationship between Mr. Judge and H.P.B., which first appeared in *Eirenican,* organ of the Peace Lodge, in England, and is reprinted in the *Canadian Theosophist.* The article begins by saying that "The work of Mr. W. Q. Judge is not as well-known to the Adyar membership as it should be," pointing out that Judge was called by H.P. B. once "her only friend." A summary of quotations then follows:

> Judge came to London in 1888 to join her in making plans for forming the Esoteric Section. In this year she said he had been a chela for 13 years, "of all the chelas the one who has suffered the most and asked the least." She appointed him head of the E.S. in America, "the Antaskarana between American thought and . . . . trans-Himalayan knowledge," "the only man in the Eastern and Esoteric School in whom I have confidence enough not to have extracted from him a pledge," "my only friend," part of herself "since several aeons," "my dearest brother and co-founder of the Theosophical Society," "one of the three founders of the Theosophical Society, the only three who have remained true as a rock to the Cause," "The Resuscitator of Theosophy in the United States," "the heart and soul" of the Theosophical Society in America. "It is to you chiefly, if not entirely, that the Theosophical Society owes its existence in 1888. Let me then thank you for it, for the first, and perhaps for the last, time publicly, and from the bottom of my heart."

The Split That Should Not Have Occurred

The following quotations from H.P.B., particularly the last, indicate what, in her own opinion, must be considered the tragedy of the Olcott-Besant cabal against Judge—which was ultimately responsible for the division of the T.S. and the elimination of the possibility that, without such an occurrence, Judge might have lived to succeed Olcott:

> "On this important occasion, my feeble voice is but the echo of other more sacred voices, and the transmitter of the approval of

Those whose presence is alive in more than one true Theosophical heart, and lives, as I know, pre-eminently in yours." "Take my place in America now," she wrote, "and, after I am gone, at Adyar"; "Judge is one of the Founders and a man who has ever been true to the Masters . . . and Judge will be president of the T.S. after our death or the T.S. will die with us."

"Black Magic" in 1950

An item in the "Notes and Comments" section of *Mental Hygiene* for January gives evidence that modern psychologists are commencing to probe the darker as well as the deeper aspects of psychic study. The heading of this particular report reads: "Duke University Psychiatrists Investigating Black Magic and Hexes." The editor summarizes:

> Duke University psychiatrists now are grappling with "black magic," and "hexing spells" in particular, according to a statement recently issued by the university's bureau of public information.
>
> Dr. Vernon Kinross-Wright, Duke neuropsychiatrist, has urged the Southern Medical Association to take a closer look at black magic and hexes. The majority of hex victims have serious mental illnesses, he declared, but some do not.
>
> Psychiatrists see a very small percentage of hex victims, but, stated Dr. Kinross-Wright, "I know from experience and from what I have been told by other patients that there are many cases of real or imaginary hexing which go unrecognized. . . ."
>
> "Modern urban cultures regard those who express such ideas of influence as psychotic," Dr. Kinross-Wright continued. "But cultural change lags far behind, particularly in isolated rural regions in the South, and such ideas are not to be lightly dismissed as crazy."
>
> The healing power of the "counter hex" by a conjure man apparently is so great, Dr. Kinross-Wright told the Southern doctors, that "I do not believe we should reject it as mere mumbo-jumbo. Let me urge you to more careful consideration of the meaning of hexing spells. It will promote better understanding of the patient—perhaps preventing unnecessary investigation and treatment."

Two Approaches

As one would expect, when an attitude of serious investigation is evinced by psychiatrists, various exploitations of this scientific interest will deluge the general public and increasing doses of sensational literature on similar topics doubtless appear. The lurid magazine *See,* a few months ago, carried an article purporting to be a case history survey dealing with recent instances of "successful" sorcery, and a

quarter-book thriller entitled *The Witching Night,* by W. S. Cody, has lately appeared—a cleverly written portrayal of Black Magic in a fully modern setting. But, conversely, articles such as that in *Mental Hygiene* indicate a hope that sorcery and psychic phenomena will increasingly be treated by the approach of reason, and, ultimately, such a development cannot fail to serve as a protection for those who wallow in the macabre with the excuse that the whole realm is beyond reason. In this regard one may commend especially Donald Powell Wilson's attitude toward and treatment of the powers of sorcery, as he described the amazing psychic capacities of Hadad, a Negro "magician" encountered in prison. (*My Six Convicts,* see Lookout for October, 1952, p. 567.)

The Psychology of Learning

A series of remarkable redefinitions of the "psychological structure" of children has recently made its way into published form, indicating that some sociologists and many psychologists are peering beyond the "personality," and encountering glimpses of the Soul within. Illustrative quotations are available from recent writings of sociologist David Riesman, Arthur Jersild of Teacher's College, Columbia, and Dr. Alan Gregg of the Rockefeller Foundation.

"In Search of Self"

Under the above heading—a philosophically intriguing title, to say the least—Arthur Jersild appraises educational theories which depend upon the process of "conditioning" for the ethical improvement of humanity. Jersild holds that too much emphasis upon "societal conditioning" detracts attention from the fact that *"the most significant learning comes from self-evaluation."* With either children or adults, the Discovery of Oneself is the real key to moral progress. In this light, the function of the teacher becomes less one of "conditioning" pupils than of helping them to see that the most thrilling accomplishments of life come from progressive awakenings of their own *inner* being. Stephen Corey of the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute, summarizes thus in the foreword of *In Search of Self:*

> Mr. Jersild believes that the child has more capacity for understanding himself than we educators, or others for that matter, have ever realized. He believes, too, that something can be done, by teachers, to aid boys and girls to make what is probably the most important discovery of all—a discovery of themselves.

THE ANTITHESIS OF MATERIALISM

H.P.B., in *The Secret Doctrine,* equates materialism with "luxurious decay." What does she imply? Clearly, such an association of ideas is logical, for those who focus their attention upon achieving the maximum of physical pleasure, and consequently upon safeguarding themselves against any sort of discomfort, will continually flinch before the rigors of self-discovery—hence suffer *moral* "decay." Most educators of the brave new world of the twentieth century have thoughtlessly assumed that learning should be made effortless, and that children should be prevented from encountering any of the many forms of suffering adults have known.

There are exceptions, however. David Riesman, one of the most influential sociologists of our time, and author of *The Lonely Crowd,* submits that no one can be happy with himself unless he is, at least in part or at times, engaged in challenging effort. In a recent article ("Changes in Leisure Attitudes," *Antioch Review,* Winter, 1953), Riesman points out that even children like to give themselves tasks which "challenge," and that even their "play" is most intense and most enjoyable when they are imaginatively striving to overcome obstacles. Riesman then remarks that "many of our workaday tasks as adults can be handled with a certain quality of leisure if we are able to regard work as a series of challenging tasks to be mastered." He adds:

> On the other hand, we can be playful at work as a way of *evading* demands, sometimes by being one of the boys, pretending to ourselves and others that, if we really worked, we would get to the top. Students often play such games with themselves. But this is not really carrying out in adult life the effort at competence which is our lesson learned from the play of the child. That requires that we work at the top of our bent, while at the same time enjoying the very process of accomplishment. . . .

THE FUNCTION OF "SUFFERING"

Dr. Alan Gregg, of the Rockefeller Foundation, has explored the same theme, noting that children who are *not* surrounded by constant diversions often develop the greatest capacity for profundity. As quoted in *Commentary* for January, 1953, Gregg says:

> In my opinion the fact that so many creative men and women tell us that in their childhood they had much illness or loneliness or lots of time to swing on the gate is more significant than we realize. Illness and freedom from overstimulation give a child time to absorb

his impressions, to integrate and organize them, and finally to create from his whole being a response.

J. Glen Gray, who has quoted Dr. Gregg in a *Commentary* article to illustrate this aspect of learning, concludes:

> Such a conclusion takes us, at least temporarily, beyond the bounds of science. It says simply that maturity is a mystery and we know so little about it that all we can be is sympathetic observers, waiting for this human *summum bonum* to appear from the depths each child brings with him. Such, at any rate, is the conclusion that seems to me most in harmony with what we know.

Need For Further Study

To return to Arthur Jersild's *In Search of Self,* we find a more thorough development of the scholarly awareness that there is an "inner man," and that when societal devices or amusements distract us from discovering more of this "real" or "permanent" self, as Jersild calls it, both the individual and the society in which he lives suffer deprivation. While Dr. Jersild is not trying to make "suffering" in its usual sense popular, his whole book is an effective argument that all *significant* learning entails revaluation of Self, and that such revaluations, necessarily involving the relinquishment of preconceptions and personal dogmas, will cause discomfort. The following passage will be recognized by all educators as an unusual development of thought, a far cry from zealous attempts to isolate children from any internal suffering. Jersild asks:

> Can there be any significant learning without pain? To raise such a question in an educational document is heresy. But it is a question that needs to be raised: for often in an effort to apply the doctrine of interest in education we probably have helped learners (and teachers) to evade reality and have confirmed them in their self-deception and illusion.

A Subtle Dimension

> By way of partial answer, the writer is convinced that the significance of learning cannot be measured by its painfulness. Learning through which the person undergoes a change within himself by means of a discovery concerning his resources and abilities—a discovery which adds something to the self—not only can be accomplished painlessly but may be an exhilarating experience.
>
> However, in connection with learning which necessitates a revision, a change—giving up a cherished illusion, seeing oneself more real-

istically and surrendering something false—the case is quite different. It is doubtful that a person at any level can give up a cherished notion about himself or pointedly realize a limitation within himself, which previously he has tried to gloss over, without sharp discomfort, even though in the long run he will be far more comfortable and happier for having faced himself. The truth that heals hurts for a time.

If the school undertakes to promote self-understanding, it must face the likelihood that there will be painful periods. There will be times when it will be painful to an individual pupil and, if the writer's observations are a guide, such a program will frequently be painful to the teacher, particularly during the time when the teacher is finding his way. Many teachers shrink from the program for this reason.

"Conditioning" Disappoints Depth

Many applications of the "inner-self" point of view represented by Drs. Gregg and Jersild may be made in the social and political spheres. Just as enthusiastic teachers have attempted to lead children away from introspection, so that they will not become "morbid"—or too original or peculiar in their thinking—so does society at large preoccupy itself with a presumed obligation to serve the desires of the purely personal man. Yet the deepest meaning of freedom in human history can never be grasped by men and women who are not appreciative of freedom's *origin as an attitude of mind,* which places original expression and self-knowledge on a higher level than physical welfare.

Gordon Keith Chalmers, whose book, *The Republic and the Person,* has been mentioned in recent issues of Lookout, discusses the need for revising the "conditioning philosophy" in education on a national as well as a pedagogical scale:

In summary of the current American practice and discussion of educational aims, it may be said that they are those of the modern state, largely welfare; the aims announced have substituted means for ends and are derived from social science. They may be summarized by the slogans: Education for Life Adjustment, and Conditioning the Attitude. They have dislodged the aim still effective in the best work of the best teachers.

Preoccupation with social techniques and terminology and the consequent romantic deference to the ideas at the center of liberalism, has the following effect upon school work. On the one hand, these American dreams and hopes being treated as a "given" of history, little time is expended upon them; they are assumed. On the other,

extensive descriptions of the social arrangements of the day interfere with devoting the precious hours of school and college to the critical knowledge and understanding of freedom itself, the ethical core of American life.

George Washington Carver Day Proclaimed

The life of George Washington Carver may well be characterized as an American saga. That many so regard it is now attested by the fact that Governor Dewey of New York has named Jan. 5 as George Washington Carver Day. Jan. 5 is the death-day of this remarkable man. The date of his birth is not known, except that he was born of slave parents in about 1864, in the border State of Missouri. It was at the time of the American Civil War and Missouri was the center of guerilla fighting. One night, his mother and her infant child were stolen by raiders; the mother was never heard of again, but the future George W. Carver was found unharmed, and later traded from his captors for a race horse valued at three hundred dollars. Eventually he returned to his former home in Missouri with a family named Carver.

From this inauspicious, or certainly unpresumptuous beginning, Carver grew to become an inspiring vindication of the Theosophical claim that no man is limited by anything other than his own internal, individual *karma.* Neither membership in an underprivileged race, lack of mother or father, nor economic deprivation held back the fruition of Carver's amazing capacities.

When Carver died peacefully at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama on Jan. 5, 1943, many forms of homage had already been gratefully bestowed upon the former slave. Now, Governor Dewey, in setting Jan. 5 aside in his honor, describes the Negro scientist as "one of the most versatile and extraordinary geniuses who ever lived."

Some of Carver's Achievements

The New York *Journal,* on the tenth anniversary of Carver's death, contained these informative passages on the unusual life of a true moral leader of his people and of the world:

> Most of his childhood at the Carver farm was spent roaming the woods and fields, studying trees and plants, and he kept up this interest. His brilliance as a botanist won him a faculty post at Iowa State when he graduated. He stayed there two years, till Booker T. Washington wrote him from Tuskegee Institute: "I cannot promise you money, position or fame. These things I ask you to give up. I offer

you in their place work, hard work, the task of bringing a people from degradation, poverty and waste to full manhood." Carver went to work at Tuskegee, teaching and carrying on endless research to enable his brethren to make a better living from the soil of the South. Most had a bare existence from cotton. Carver produced better varieties of cotton and preached the gospel of diversified crops. He developed hundreds of new uses for peanuts and sweet potatoes to expand the market and induce southern farmers to rotate them with cotton. He discovered scores of new uses for such lowly things as red clay and sawdust. He practically invented the science of chemurgy —the chemical transformation of agricultural waste to useful products. The whole South came to recognize a Negro as a great benefactor. Soon after Carver died, Rep. Dewey Short of Missouri said, "The least a grateful nation could do is to build a monument to this hero of humanity."

The True Meaning of Hero Worship

Rep. Short referred to George Washington Carver as a "hero of humanity"; and what H.P.B. wrote in her article on "Genius" about the true significance and reason for "hero worship" is certainly most applicable:

> To this day the Ancients are accused of blasphemy and fetishism for their "hero worship." But have the modern historians ever fathomed the cause of such "worship"! We believe not. Otherwise they would be the first to become aware that that which was "worshipped," or rather to which honours were rendered was neither the man of clay, nor the *personality*—the Hero or Saint So-and-So, which still prevails in the Roman Church, a church which beatifies the body rather than the soul—but the divine imprisoned Spirit, the *exiled* "god" *within* that personality. . . .
>
> And it would learn that if the streets of the city that honoured one such man, were strewn with roses for the passage of the Hero of the day; if every citizen was called to bow in reverence to him who was so feasted; and if both priest and poet vied in their zeal to immortalize the hero's name after his death—occult philosophy tells us the reason why this was done. "Behold," it saith, "in every manifestation of genius—*when combined with virtue*—in the warrior or the Bard, the great painter, artist, statesman or man of Science, who soar high above the heads of the vulgar herd, the undeniable presence of the celestial exile, the divine *Ego* whose jailor thou art, Oh man of matter"! Thus, that which we call *deification* applied to the immortal God within, not to the dead walls or the human tabernacle that contained him. And this was done in tacit and silent recognition of the efforts made by the divine captive who, under the most adverse circumstances of incarnation, still succeeded in manifesting himself.

The Meaningless Punishment

As was indicated here in a summary of recent works on penology authored by prison officials, there is now persistent disapproval of the death penalty emanating from influential sources. From time to time, also, a striking novel adds to the weight of psychological testimony brought to bear against execution—with Willard Motley's *Knock on Any Door* one of the most impressive and dramatic examples. Written in an entirely different vein and with a backdrop of fantasy rather than of hard realism, English novelist Chris Massie's *Death Goes Hunting* also is suggestive of some aspects of Theosophical teaching during its criticism of the gallows and the electric chair. For Massie's murderer, upon being severed from the body after hanging, is *not dead.* He lives, temporarily, in a strange nether world which interpenetrates the existence of the London he has been forced to quit. And, at least at times, he can profoundly influence those still living. In one case, that of a man approaching his own death from illness, he "takes possession" of the man's failing body and induces a marked change in behavior—not, in this case, for the worse.

"Courage, Brother"

The following passage, which both begins and ends *Death Goes Hunting,* sums up the irrelevance of the clergy to the whole subject of death, while also remarking the obscurely felt sense of guilt which most of those who take part in execution proceedings must feel:

> A little group of nervous officials filed into his cell. He had awaited their arrival with casual contempt, but when they stood together in a little heap, fumbling with their hands, and not knowing how to address him, he felt a sudden reclaiming sensation that he was the only man there.
>
> He said to the hangman with gusto, "Get on with it," and suffered himself to be pinioned as a child suffers itself to be dressed.
>
> He was genuinely sorry for the scared-looking sheriff, and noticed that the governor and the doctor smelled strongly of whisky. As they moved towards the scaffold he was mildly amused at the embarrassed chaplain who strengthened his own weak nerves by grasping his hand and whispering "Courage, brother."
>
> On the trap-door he stood shutting out from his mind those final rites of hypocrisy which were giving the password to launch him into eternity. During this last moment he concentrated his whole being on life, on his own life; drawing back into himself until he had shut out everything except the functioning of his own flesh and blood.

> And there sheltered, he lay in wait for death, listening to himself live. . . . Now he was dead he could not get away. He had somewhere to go, but a superincumbent weight lay with heavy pressure upon him, and he could not leave the thing which had been himself. It was lying naked in the mortuary, and he wondered how it was that the nervous chaplain was there with the doctor. He looked down at himself, the body that had been his, but which he had never seen so palpably as he saw it now.
>
> Little they knew he was still Brodribb! In sudden frenzy he shrieked at them, "You've not killed me!" His voice seemed to penetrate to the socket of the universe, but neither the doctor nor the chaplain stirred in his direction.

The Hidden Killers

Not since Marya Mannes' *Message From A Stranger* has there been so interesting a portrayal of "after-death-state" conditions, and in both instances, theosophical students will note, the implication is that the interval during which communication with departed ones can still take place is but temporary. This is not the "other world" of the spiritualists, but, simply, as in ancient theosophical doctrines, a *transition* state. Mr. Massie, however, is even more interested than Miss Mannes in laying bare the psychological viciousness of conventional society. The after-death world in *Death Goes Hunting* is one whose denizens regard with greatest loathing those members of the privileged classes who have misused their responsibilities towards their less intelligent fellows, and thus created conditions which kill spiritual aspirations in large numbers of the populace. These, according to Massie, are the most despicable "murderers," not the highly publicized killers who are usually swept to violence through emotion.

Massie approaches, but does not enter, the realms of reincarnation-theorizing. In a discussion with a prison warder, for instance, the murderer remarks that "It may be that on some other plane, in some other dimension, you *are* the prisoner, and I, the warder. Lives are lived inside one another like the fleshy skins of an onion. They are all lived together, and yet they are all apart. That is a little bit too much for you, I suppose; but the good father in me would have gone on being the good father if something else had not happened."

Do We Give it Up?

The man hanged, in Massie's story, is one David Brodribb, who, during most of his earthly hours was a kind and loving father. The

warder knows this, and is acutely disturbed by the impending execution. When Brodribb remarks that "death is a beautiful thing when you come to think about it," the warder replies sympathetically, and a short dialogue ensues which is representative of the tone of much of the book—although it should also be noted that numerous weird speculations and macabre fantasies also are encountered on intervening pages:

> "I am glad you are not worrying, David. You are good human stuff through and through. This business is a mistake."
>
> "It is always a mistake to kill," said Brodribb, "but it is so easy to do it. A word, a kiss, will do it. I think it is best to do it with a knife if you are going to do it at all. You pay then—like for like. I am not sorry to die."
>
> "I am going on a little further," said Moulton. "I don't know why. There is no particular reason for me to do so. There are plenty of good men to fill my post. Life is a habit that is hard to give up. Or we think it is hard. You don't think so, David?"
>
> "I can't be certain that we do give it up," replied Brodribb. "There is no certainty about anything outside actual human experience."

Ban on Race Discrimination

There is no ostensible connection between Columbia University and the Union of South Africa, but the fact that both are making progress in eliminating racial discrimination indicates that the *real* problems of humanity are everywhere the same. The Los Angeles *Times* for May 11 reports:

> Columbia University has decided to withdraw recognition by Oct. 1, 1960, from all campus organizations, except religious groups, that deny membership to an applicant because of his race, color or religion.
>
> The action was announced today by the Committee on Student Organizations, a supervisory student-faculty-administration group. It reflects the consensus of Columbia College students as expressed in a recent referendum.

Influence of War Veterans

Although hardly anyone thinks of the battlefield as the environment for generating ideals, the *Times* report suggests that the heavy influx of war veterans to the campuses has vitalized movement toward a profounder conviction of universal brotherhood—many veterans apparently having come to the conclusion, in the travail of war, that race distinction is a myth and a farce. The *Times* report says:

> The ban strikes directly at discriminatory practices of some fraternities, which have been a hotly debated issue at Columbia and in other

colleges since the end of the last war and the heavy influx of war veterans to the campuses.

NOT CONFINED TO COLUMBIA

Definite progress is also being made by other universities in endeavoring to better interracial understanding. The *Times* report supplies the following information:

> The prohibition is similar to that in force at Amherst College, the University of Connecticut and Dartmouth College, and one projected for the University of Michigan. At the University of Connecticut four of the 18 fraternities severed ties with their national organizations as a result of the ban.
>
> At other colleges where no formal ban has been enacted, there has been a series of revolts by local chapters against the policies of the national fraternities. These actions usually have ended either with expulsion or resignation of the chapters. The most recent of these was the expulsion last February of the Williams College Chapter of Phi Delta Theta for pledging a Jewish student.
>
> The Columbia action directly opposes a resolution adopted last year by the National Interfraternity Conference, which declared that "any attempt to restrict or regulate the right of a college fraternity to choose its own members was an inadvisable interference with the fundamental right of free association guaranteed by the United States Constitution."

HISTORIC STAND COLLAPSES

The *Saturday Review of Literature* for May 16 presented the following news on similar progress in South Africa:

> The South African Federation of Trade Unions and the South African Trades and Labor Council, along with several subsidiary organizations, constituting the principal organizations of South African labor, declared unequivocally that South African labor unions should be open to all, "irrespective of race or color." After a long, historic stand by labor for a privileged position on the basis of color, this decision to abandon the color line at this critical juncture in race relations within the Union was of revolutionary significance, for one of the most important factors prolonging the inferior status of the Negro has been the division of workers' ranks between black and white. This declaration of policy was a direct challenge on the part of all the forces of organized labor of the Government's apartheid policy that "there shall be no intermingling of Europeans and non-Europeans in trade unions." In recent years unions have been taking in Negroes increasingly as the number of skilled and semi-skilled Negro workers have increased.